

Labor Age

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the C.P.L.A. program of five months before was getting on its way.

The amalgamated unions thereupon announced, at the mass meeting, that the first conference on the National Federation of Silk Workers would be held in Easton, Pa. or Paterson, the first week in March. In anticipation of that conference, the C.P.L.A. silk workers have drawn up an outline of what this new industrial, autonomous union (affiliated with the rest of the textile workers through the U.T.W.) should approximate, to do the job that should be done.

The C.P.L.A. is also driving for further mass meetings of the workers, since the first proved such a success. The Paterson branch has drawn up a rough copy of an ordinance licensing manufacturing establishments in silk, and has put it up to the Mayor to come out in support of such a measure. It would strike, at one blow, at the filthy conditions in the "cockroach" shops. Whether it is passed or not, the discussion centering around it will inflame the workers to see that these shops must be destroyed at all costs. As worker after worker says: "There was nothing like this agitation in post-strike times before. Paterson has never seen anything to approach the discussion and commotion on our conditions."

A Nation-Wide Strike

The C.P.L.A. has fanned that discussion into flame. It must also convert it into action. The National Federation must be a vigorous organization. It must work rapidly toward the goal of a nation-wide silk strike, set for the time that production will be paralyzed most effectively. In 1931, the silk workers approached very closely to that objective. There were walk-outs in New England, under the N.T.W. There was the big strike in Allentown, the first in 59 years, under the U.T.W. There was the Paterson amalgamated strike. But these efforts were not co-ordinated, nor were they simultaneous. The important thing to observe is, that these walk-outs did take place, all in the same year. To paralysis in these centers must be added stoppage of the great chains, which run through Pennsylvania in particular. They are shrewdly scattered in small towns, with their units divided.

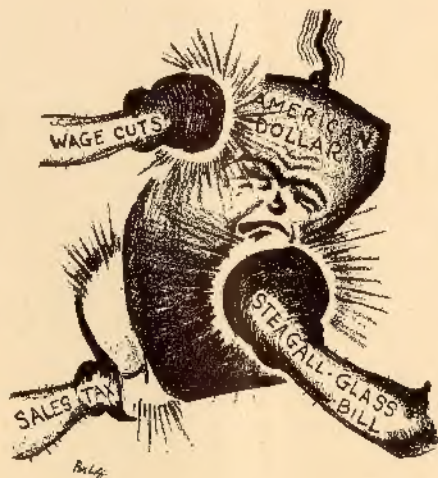
In the Paterson experience we see how the C.P.L.A. can function to the greatest advantage of the workers, and its revolutionary aim. The industrial field is peculiarly our own.

No other group has a clear-cut program that reaches the most militant workers and holds their confidence. The C.P.L.A. branches should grow largely out of the industrial struggle. They should function vigorously on their own account, independently, in every instance where a union has not adopted the C.P.L.A. program in detail. They should take the lead in the fight against the manufacturers, before the workers as a whole. Simultaneously, they should work hard within the unions for the carrying out of the program which they are hammering at in a public way on their own account.

They should not make any cheap political alliances within the unions for a temporary advantage, but should stand for unity based on a program. It is the program that should be uppermost, and action should be the test of whether it is sound.

The Paterson silk workers' branch has followed this policy. It is composed of militant workers, who were the foremost on the picket lines. In its ranks are the bulk of those active spirits who were discriminated against for their intense picketing. Its membership which is in the mills has always shown fight in the past, and determination to advance the union. By raising the C.P.L.A. banner independently against the bosses, while at the same time working within the union, it has done an excellent bit of post-strike work.

It is all-important that this spirit and purpose carry on into other centers, with militant, vigilant parallels everywhere for the unions which we plan to stimulate to fighting efficiency. Paterson can say that it has made an auspicious beginning.



Rumbling in Southern Textiles

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League, which is affiliated with the Southern Industrial League. Its purpose is to bring a better understanding and a closer cooperation between the hill farmer and the mill worker. It is also training the farmers in cooperative farming and marketing of their produce. It is working to have the farmer sell his produce direct to the consumer, which is the worker, thereby cutting out the profiteer and enabling the worker to get his grains and vegetables at a lower price, also enabling the farmer to get more for his work. Another part of its program is to bring the mill worker and the farmer together into a labor party which will nominate workers and small farmers for local offices.

The conditions of the small Carolina farmers are as bad as those of the mill workers. These farmers raise vegetables for a "money crop" which are sold on the local markets. The company stores, to whom they must sell most of their produce, pay them 10 cents for a 12 pound peck of corn meal and sell it to the worker for 25 cents after having taken 2 pounds out. They pay the farmer 10 cents per dozen for his eggs and sell them to the workers at 35 cents; 40 cents per bushel for potatoes and sell them for \$1.00.

The League is now conducting debates all over the country on subjects familiar to the people, thus giving the workers an opportunity to learn about their conditions and about ways of bettering them. The workers are for the first time learning that the farmers can be of great help to them in their industrial disputes.

The Progressive Farmers League is creating great interest among the farmers and we are having requests for speakers every week. At present we have about all the work we can take care of until we can get some of the people trained who will be able to go out and hold meetings.

Everything is shaping fine for a farmer-labor party. Perhaps if we have time to get this underway when the next strike comes, our people can go on the picket line without as great danger of being murdered in cold blood as the Marion strikers were.